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General and complete disarmament

Letter dated 1 August 2000 from the representatives of China and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the joint statement by the President of the People's Republic of China and the President of the Russian Federation on anti-missile defence, adopted in Beijing on 18 July 2000 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly under item 74 of the provisional agenda.

(*Signed*) **Wang** Yingfan
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Gennady **Gatilov**
First Deputy Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 1 August 2000 from the representatives of China and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Joint statement by the President of the People's Republic of China and the President of the Russian Federation on anti-missile defence

The President of the People's Republic of China and the President of the Russian Federation state the following:

The development of the international situation has fully confirmed the conclusions and assessments regarding anti-missile defence, set forth in the joint statement entitled "Chinese-Russian relations on the threshold of the twenty-first century", adopted at the highest level on 23 November 1998, the Chinese-Russian press communiqué on consultations on questions concerning the ABM Treaty of 14 April 1999, and also the Chinese-Russian joint declaration of 10 December 1999, which was adopted at the highest level.

The 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, hereinafter referred to as the ABM Treaty, remains the cornerstone of global strategic stability and international security and constitutes the basis for the framework of the key international agreements on reducing and limiting strategic offensive weapons and on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Maintaining and strictly complying with the ABM Treaty are extremely important.

In this connection, the plan by the United States of America to create a national anti-missile defence system for that country's territory, which is prohibited under the ABM Treaty, has given rise to profound concern. China and the Russian Federation believe that this plan, in essence, aims to seek unilateral superiority in the military sphere and security matters. The implementation of such a plan would have the most serious negative consequences not only for the security of China, the Russian Federation and other States, but also for the security of the United States itself, and for global strategic stability throughout the world. Therefore, China and the Russian Federation firmly express their opposition to this plan.

Undermining the ABM Treaty would trigger a new spiral in the arms race and reverse the positive trends that have come about in world politics since the end of the "cold war". This, without any doubt, is not in the fundamental interests of any State in the world. The States that are calling for a review of this fundamental weapons-reduction treaty will bear the complete responsibility for undermining international stability and security as well as for all the resulting consequences.

An analysis of current international conditions shows the total lack of any grounds for using the so-called missile threat posed by certain States as a pretext for justifying demands to amend the ABM Treaty. The proposals for the Treaty's so-called "adaptation" are designed to conceal a desire to act contrary to its provisions. Changing the contents of the ABM Treaty's text is tantamount to destroying the Treaty, with all the resultant negative consequences. In the current strategic situation, maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the ABM Treaty is of extremely important and real significance.

The correct way to react to new challenges in the area of international security, maintaining peace throughout the world and protecting the legitimate security interests of any State is not to destroy the ABM Treaty, but rather to promote the establishment of a just and rational new international political order, reject methods based on power politics and the excessive use of armed force in international affairs, and further strengthen regional and global security. At the same time, it is important for the Russian Federation and the United States, on the basis of strict observance of the ABM Treaty, to continue and to deepen the process of reducing strategic offensive weapons, engaging other nuclear Powers in the future at the appropriate time. It is essential, through political, legal and diplomatic means, to step up international efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, explore the possibility of gradually establishing a global system for monitoring the non-proliferation of missiles and missile technology, and develop a broad and non-discriminatory dialogue and cooperation in this field.

Non-strategic anti-missile defence and international cooperation in this area, which are not prohibited under the ABM Treaty, must not be to the detriment of the security interests of other countries, lead to the establishment or strengthening of exclusive military or political blocs, or undermine global and regional stability and security. On the basis of this position, China and the Russian Federation express serious concern and enter a strong protest in connection with the plans of certain States to deploy in the Asia-Pacific region such a non-strategic missile defence system, which will lead to the above-mentioned negative consequences. Including Taiwan in any form in anti-missile defence systems set up by foreign States is unacceptable and will seriously undermine stability in the region.

The General Assembly resolution on preservation of and compliance with the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, adopted at its fifty-fourth session, is of prime importance. China and the Russian Federation call upon the world community to continue to give serious attention to the actions by the States in question aimed at speeding up the development of anti-missile defence systems, which could destroy the global strategic balance and stability in the world, and also to take the necessary measures to forestall such dangerous developments.

The cooperation carried out between China and the Russian Federation up to the present in maintaining the global strategic balance and stability is cause for satisfaction. Building on the relations of equitable, trusting partnership and strategic cooperation between the two countries, China and the Russian Federation will continue their close cooperation with regard to the above-mentioned questions and, within the framework of their respective international obligations, will also strengthen cooperation in other areas related to these issues in order to ensure their own, regional and global security.

Jiang Zemin
President of the People's Republic of China

V. V. **Putin**
President of the Russian Federation

Beijing, 18 July 2000